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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAHA 000064

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 8/5/2033  
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [JA](#)  
SUBJECT: OKINAWA GOVERNOR'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON: POTENTIAL FORUM  
SHOPPING

CLASSIFIED BY: Kevin K. Maher, Consul General, U.S. Consulate  
General, Naha, Japan, Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

Subject: Okinawa Governor's Visit to Washington: Potential  
Forum Shopping

11. (C) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST: Okinawa's Prefectural Governor may be planning to visit Washington D.C. this fall to seek meetings with USG officials and to ask for changes to bilaterally-agreed base realignment plans for Okinawa and revisions to the U.S.-Japan SOFA. The USG position is to reject such requests for changes to these agreements. We ask that any office approached with a request to receive Governor Nakaima coordinate its response with Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs James Shinn, in order to maintain a unified USG response and to prevent forum shopping by the Governor. END SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST.

12. (C) Okinawa Prefectural Governor Hirokazu Nakaima may be planning his first official visit to Washington, D.C. The Governor's Executive Office has informed ConGen Naha that the Governor at present does not plan to travel before the U.S. elections in November, but we are receiving persistent reports from the Governor's private security advisors that he could visit Washington as soon as September. Although Governor Nakaima has been far more supportive of U.S. Forces and facilities in Okinawa than his predecessor, he is seeking difficult changes to our bilateral security agreements, including agreed base realignment plans in Okinawa and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). The USG has responded officially to such suggestions for changes to our agreements several times in the past year at the highest levels, noting that we expect the realignment plans to be implemented as agreed, and that neither the USG nor the GOJ is prepared to

entertain revising the SOFA. Governor Nakaima does not like the answers he hears, and apparently hopes that if he forum shops in Washington, he may get another answer more to his liking.

¶3. (C) If Governor Nakaima were to secure meetings in Washington, we believe he would raise the three following long-standing requests:

-- Revisions to Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF): Although Governor Nakaima says he supports building the FRF replacement facility for Marine Corps Air Station Futenma he still insists in his discussions with the GOJ that he must uphold his previous election promise to secure revisions to the base realignment plan that was agreed between the two governments. Nakaima would seek USG support for his proposed revisions. Visiting OSD officials and the Consul General have stressed in meetings this week with Nakaima that the USG expects the FRF plan to be implemented as agreed, and have further explained that attempting to revise the runway location could threaten to unravel the entire U.S.-GOJ realignment package. The Secretary of Defense, Ambassador Schieffer, and other senior USG officials on many occasions have told the GOJ that we are not prepared to revise the agreed plan for FRF.

-- Putting MCAS Futenma into a "closed state": In recent months, Governor Nakaima has called for the USG and GOJ to develop stopgap measures to "reduce the danger and noise" at Futenma while relocation to FRF is underway, by putting MCAS Futenma into a "closed state." In late July, Governor Nakaima succeeded in persuading the GOJ to establish a new internal working group to explore his ideas. This is a red herring that threatens to derail our efforts to put the FRF construction timeline back on track. We have consistently told the Governor that the functions and capabilities of MCAS Futenma must be

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fully maintained until relocated to the new FRF facility as agreed.

-- FUNDAMENTAL SOFA REVISIONS: Governor Nakaima repeatedly calls for fundamental revision of the SOFA. Both the USG and the GOJ consistently take the position that we are not prepared to enter into discussions on revising the SOFA, but instead focus on improving the operation of the SOFA. The on-going forum for such discussions is the bi-weekly meeting of the Joint Committee, composed of senior GOJ and USG officials in Tokyo.

¶4. (C) ACTION REQUESTED: A unified USG stance is critical to our ongoing efforts to secure implementation of the agreed plans on realignment in Okinawa. It is important that Governor Nakaima not be allowed to forum shop in Washington, since he will use every opportunity to try and bypass normal channels to seek an answer that he can construe as flexibility on the part of the USG to revise our agreed program. In order to avoid this problem, the Embassy requests that any USG organization approached to meet with Governor Nakaima coordinate its response directly with Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs James Shinn. END ACTION REQUEST.

¶5. (U) This message has been approved by Ambassador Schieffer.  
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